

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 1334

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP, SHUM, NO
SUBJECT: NORWAY ON HUMAN RIGHTS: ONE STEP TO THE FRONT,
ONE STEP TO THE SIDE

REF: (A) OSLO 0723 (B) OSLO 0505

SUMMARY: DURING HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL MAR 16 VISIT OF CHIEF UN
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION DELEGATE ALLARD LOWENSTEIN (REPORTED
SEPTEL), NORWEGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND INDICATED THAT
WHILE NORWAY INTERESTED IN STRENGTHENING PROCEDURES FOR PRO-
TECTING INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AT SAME TIME IT MUST RECOGNIZE
LIMITATIONS IMPOSED BY COUNTRY'S PARTICULAR SITUATION, I.E,
IN NORWAY'S CASE ITS BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION.
FRYDENLUND ALSO AGREED TO CONSIDER SPONSORING A MEETING OF SELECTED
WESTERN COUNTRIES TO COORDINATE APPROACH TO HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE
FOR APRIL UNCTAD MEETING, END SUMMARY.

1. DURING LOWENSTEIN'S MAR 16 CALL FOREIGN MINISTER KNUT
FRYDENLUND DESCRIBED GON'S STRONG SUPPORT OF HUMAN RIGHTS
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INITIATIVES AND MENTIONED SOME OF THE LIMITATIONS GON
FACES IN HUMAN RIGHTS RIELD. FOREIGN MINISTER'S ESPECIALLY
PERCEPTIVE AND STRAIGHT FORWARD STATEMENTS PROBABLY INDICATE
LINE OF FUTURE NORWEGIAN HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY.

2. NORWAY AND UNITED STATES, FRYDENLUND SAID, ARE BLESSED
BOTH MATERIALLY AND POLITICALLY AND, THEREFORE, HAVE CERTAIN

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO FEED MOUTHS AS WELL AS SPIRITS. AT SAME TIME, BOTH MUST FACE DEMANDS FROM RESPECTIVE PUBLICS TO PROTECT THEIR OWN WAY OF LIFE AS WELL AS TO REFLECT NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF NEED TO PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS OF MANKIND. THIS LEADS TO DILEMMA FOR NORWAY IN THAT IT FEELS FREER TO PROTEST TREATMENT OF CHILEANS THAN SOVIETS.

3. EACH HUMAN RIGHTS CASE MUST BE DEALT WITH ON INDIVIDUAL BASIS BY EACH COUNTRY BECAUSE EACH FACES DIFFERENT CONCLUSIONS RE COMPARATIVE DESIREABILITY OF EXTENDED REACTION AGAINST OFFENDING NATIONS VVS. MAINTENANCE OF TIES WITH IT. IN THIS CONNECTION FRYDENLUND DESCRIBED GON'S ACTION IN RECENT CHARTA 77 CASE (REF A) AS EXAMPLE WHERE HIS GOVERNMENT WENT TO FAR. IN THAT INSTANCE, OSLO EXPRESSED ITS OWN STRONG DISTASTE FOR PRAGUE'S REPRESSION OF CHARTA 77 SIGNATORIES TO GOC BUT THEN WENT FURTHER AND CANCELLED VISIT OF GOC'S TRADE MINISTER WHO WAS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE TO SIGN LONG PLANNED ECONOMIC AGREEMENT. IN FRYDENLUND'S VIEW THIS LATER STEP WAS IN RETROSPECT A MISTAKE, FOR HE SAID, "WE SHOULD HAVE AS MANY CONTACTS AS POSSIBLE WITH OFFENDING NATIONS AS WELL AS MAKING OUR OWN POINT. WE MUST AVOID LINKAGE BETWEEN HUMAN RIGHTS AND OTHER ISSUES AND NOT TRY TO BULLY COUNTRIES AS THE RESULT COULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE."

4. ON MORE POSITIVE NOTE FRYDENLUND SAID THAT WHITE PAPER ON HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH IS CURRENTLY BEING PREPARED WITHIN FOREIGN MINISTRY FOR PRESENTATION TO STARTING THIS SPRING WILL RECOMMEND THAT NORWAY ASSIST IN IMPROVEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL PROCEDURES FOR PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS. FURTHER, HE AGREED CONFIDENTIAL

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WITH LOWENSTEIN'S POINT THAT WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, UNITED STATES AND OTHER NATIONS SHARING SIMILAR VIEWS ON HUMAN RIGHTS SHOULD WORK CLOSER TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE GOALS WITHIN INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK NOW EXISTING AS WELL AS WORK TO IMPROVE SYSTEM. IN THIS CONNECTION FOREIGN MINISTER SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO FEASIBILITY OF NORWAY'S TAKING INITIATIVE IN CALLING A MEETING OF THESE COUNTRIES BEFORE END APRIL UNCTAD MEETING.

5. IN TELEPHONE CONVERSATION NEXT DAY WITH AMBASSADOR ON DIFFERENT SUBJECT, FRYDENLUND EXPRESSED REAL ADMIRATION FOR LOWENSTEIN'S GRASP OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES AND FOR HIS ENTHUSIASM ON SUBJECT.

6. COMMENT: FRYDENLUND'S STATEMENTS ARE CLEARER RECENT INDICATION OF THE BALANCING OF INTERESTS GON IS NOW CONSIDERING IN HUMAN RIGHTS AREA. GOVERNMENT WHICH LARGELY SYMPATHIZES WITH U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVE RECOGNIZES THAT ITS MANEUVERING ROOM IS CIRCUMSCRIBED BY OVERWHELMING PRESENCE OF SOVIET UNION AS WELL AS BY FEELING THAT ISOLATING HUMAN RIGHTS MALFACTORS

MAY NOT ALWAYS BE BEST WAY TO HELP VICTIMS OF OPPRESSION.
PRINCIPAL BACKDROP TO SOVIET POINT IS CLEARLY THE EXPERIENCE
GON HAS HAD IN DEALING WITH IMPORTANT, STRATEGIC ISSUES WITH
USSR IN BARENTS SEA AREA OVER PAST FEW YEARS, WHERE NORWEGIAN
PUBLIC AND PRESS CONCERN OVER HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS HAVE GENERATED
EMOTIONAL ATMOSPHERE WHICH HAVE IN GON VIEW OBSCURED AND
SOMETIMES THREATENED TO DRIVE THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO
NEGOTIATE WITH THE USSR ON OTHER ISSUES.

7. AT SAME TIME, FRYDENLUND SEEMED TO AGREE WITH LOWENSTEIN'S
THEME THAT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION PROCEDURES NEED TO BE
PROTECTED AND IMPROVED AND THAT THESE OBJECTIVES CAN BE BETTER
ACCOMPLISHED BY AFFIRMATIVE ACTION RATHER THAN BY QUIESCENT
ACCEPTANCE OF STATUS QUO. GON'S MANPOWER LIMITATIONS PLUS
OBSERVER STATUS AT UNHRC HAS MILITATED IN PAST AGAINST OSLO'S
DEEPER INVOLVEMENT, THEREFORE, FRYDENLUND'S AGREEMENT TO PURSUE
INITIATION OF UNCTAD PREP SESSION IS SIGNIFICANT.
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